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Commission on the Status of Women
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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Statement submitted by ISIS — Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

18-19649 (E) 061218

Please recycle

Statement

Trauma Relief as a Prerequisite for Enhanced Effectiveness of Social Protection Schemes for Women and Girls in Post-Conflict Contexts

The value of robust and crisis-responsive social protection systems is especially evident in post-conflict contexts where the impact of war or large-scale armed violence often places communities, households and individuals, particularly women, at risk of chronic vulnerability. Post-conflict reconstruction programmes often prioritise the rebuilding of critical physical infrastructure and the provision of basic services at the expense of a focus on 'soft' initiatives that strengthen resilience such as psychosocial support whose contribution to individual and collective ability to withstand shocks and recover from crisis is less visible.

However, for women and girls, for whom gender-based violations in conflict and especially conflict-related sexual violence have a unique psychological and physical impact, it is clear that without trauma relief, efforts for their empowerment — including targeted social protection schemes — are incomplete and less effective. Therefore, incorporating trauma relief must be a universal basic guarantee for social protection systems in post-conflict countries, if women and girls are to experience higher income, capacity and empowerment.

Several international instruments exist, offering a framework for developing and implementing social protection systems from a gender-responsive rights-based approach including important principles. For instance, a key element of the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention 1952 (No.102) that provided the model for other key conventions and recommendations, the key principle of "the participation of the persons protected in the management of social security schemes" is included as a prerequisite for achieving the minimum objectives of any social protection system. Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No 202) focused on guiding the nationally defined basic guarantees for social protection aimed at alleviating or preventing poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion by highlighting principles such as "gender equality and responsiveness to special needs."

While women in conflict-affected contexts have benefited from the principles of inclusivity, state duty to respond to special needs and to advance gender equality, when advocating for social protection schemes or post-conflict recovery programming that includes and benefits them, it has also become apparent that aside from seeking inclusion and accountability, a focus on strengthening women and girls' resilience through trauma relief must be incorporated for their empowerment especially in sight of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

Having realised this following years of work in conflict-affected Liberia, South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe, ISIS — Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange sought to generate an evidence base on the value of incorporating trauma relief in social protection schemes, by partnering with Tilburg University, Makerere University and Mbarara University to conduct research on The Cost-Benefit of Cash-Transfer Programmes and Post-Trauma Services for Economic Empowerment of Women in Uganda. The research studied the impact of government social protection programmes and trauma counselling on social economic resilience among elderly and young women in highly traumatised communities in Northern Uganda. This focused on income, social inclusion, perceived financial, information and social capabilities, systems (including access to legal, financial and medical services), experiencing less worry and lastly empowerment (a change in agency and behaviour).

The study found that the effect of support for trauma relief had an independent and higher effect on income and social-economic resilience than the social protection programmes did. It was also found that combined effect on economic resilience was highest when women received social protection support (in this case cash transfers) as well as trauma relief support (in this case counselling and self-help low-cost post-traumatic stress programme). The conclusion is therefore that trauma relief is cost-beneficial and should be addressed as a high priority in post-conflict recovery along with any social protection schemes.

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Statement submitted by International Council of Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

18-19650 (E) 061218

Please recycle

Statement

The International Council of Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, has been committed to advancing women's equal rights and empowerment since its establishment in 1888. We firmly believe that the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of women are indispensable keys to facilitating progress toward sustainable development for the world.

The International Council of Women welcomes the focus of the sixty-third United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. It is important to consider the contribution that social protection can make in improving access to public services and to creation and maintenance of sustainable infrastructure. It is also important to recognize the positive impact of gender equality, of the empowerment of women and girls and of sustainable development throughout the world. Furthermore, optimal design and equal access are critical to the role of social protection as an economic and social stabilizer, in light of significant economic disruptions stemming from the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Social protection policy is increasingly used by countries as a strategy to reduce inequality and poverty. Common forms of social protection include social insurance, social assistance and labour market interventions. As women and girls are often among the main victims of established discrimination, social protection deserves the focused attention of the International Council of Women.

Clearly, deep-rooted gender inequalities remain in all societies. Social discrimination, harmful customs and traditions, as well as dominant business practices work counter to the implementation of genuine equal rights. Women continue to suffer from gender-based violence, lack of decent work opportunities, occupational segregation and unequal pay. In far too many instances, women are denied access to basic education and health care. Women and girls are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes, while forming the brunt of those living in poverty and seriously lacking access to social protection.

Support for the equal right of women to various forms of social protection has been central to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Gender equality and women's empowerment are critical to the achievement of all seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, social protection systems, public services and infrastructure must embrace the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment as key goals and objectives.

Social protection policies and programs are key instruments for achieving economic and social development. They can take the forms of income redistribution mechanisms, cash transfers, and behavioural incentives that facilitate labour market adjustments, reduce poverty and create sustainable development. As a matter of fact, there are a host of problems associated with effective enactment of these policies and programs. In many countries, forms of social protection, which encompasses contributory and non-contributory social insurance benefits, social assistance and labour market programs, are provided only to those employed in formal labour markets. This excludes women, who are unemployed, who work in small enterprises and who work in the informal sector, from access to protection. Furthermore, the design of many social protection programs reinforces patriarchal family structures and gender stereotypes of women, which exacerbates gender inequalities.

Hence, the International Council of Women urges all governments to design and implement gender-sensitive social protection programs that are equally accessible by women, that provide equity in labour market treatment, and that overcome traditional gender roles. Only by ensuring these features will social protection programs act to promote the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. To eliminate the barriers to equal access of women to social protection, informal workers and women who do not work in the labour markets should be included within the scope and under the umbrella of social protection programs. Public care services ought to be considered in communities to alleviate the burden of care and domestic work undertaken almost exclusively by women and girls. This has been a major barrier to women entering and staying in the job market.

To achieve the greatest benefit, social protection should include gender-sensitive cash transfers and pension programs that are specifically targeted at women. It is recognized that cash transfers put directly in women's hands are almost always used for the benefit of the entire household. This form of transfer leads to improved bargaining power for women in the household, to better nutrition and health for family members and to enhanced education for all children, especially girls. To encourage better education and to promote good health for children, cash transfers ought to be tied to the children's school attendance and visits to health facilities. Long-term benefits of well-designed cash transfers can result in enhanced women's empowerment, reduction of poverty and a healthier and better-educated society.

Looking from a different perspective, with advances in medical technology, people are living longer, and women generally live longer than men. Elderly women continue to have unpaid care and domestic burdens and also face the possibility of living in poverty in old age. Social protection should include the extension of largely unconditional cash transfer programs and social pensions for older citizens. This would help to counteract the lack of social protection for the large number of older women who have been previously employed in informal markets or have engaged in unpaid work. Furthermore, it has been found that cash transfers to elderly women often act as a form of education subsidy for grandchildren and thereby improving education for the community as a whole.

The International Council of Women urges governments to provide funding for data collection and budgetary analysis to assess the underlying causes of women's exclusion from social protection programs. Only then can effective programs be formulated and implemented. The International Council of Women also urges collaboration among all sectors of society to determine the best designs for initiatives to address the underlying causes for exclusion of women from social protection. These measures in themselves can act to help promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

It is also imperative that women have a voice in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation stages of social protection initiatives. This is necessary to ensure the inclusion of meaningful gender-sensitive dimensions that address women's access to social protection and promotes gender equality and women's empowerment. Such involvement and influence will likely come about only with women's active participation in social and political leadership.

Social protection is instrumental to reducing poverty and addressing the inequalities faced by women, especially the most vulnerable rural, migrant, disabled, elderly and poor women. The International Council of Women remains steadfast in its commitment to the stated goal of the United Nations in The Agenda for Sustainable Development to end poverty in all its forms and to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

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Statement submitted by International Muslim Women's Union, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

On the wake of the 4th World Women Conference in Beijing in 1995 the International Muslim Women Union came into the international scene. It was established in 1996 and given special consultative status at the Economic and Social council of the United Nation.

Most of our leadership was present with active participation in Beijing. Hence the Beijing declaration and Platform of Action was present, (in its most areas of critical concern), in our strategy. Since the International Muslim Women Union is an international organization for Muslim women all over the globe, it embodies and caters to our vision, aspirations and ambitions. A vision based on the Islamic perspective and on Islamic approach towards all walks of life, without losing sight of the contemporary of issues in the international arena.

The International Muslim Women Union is very much concerned with eradication or rather alleviation of poverty. As such our projects are designed to meet this goal.

As mentioned earlier the International Muslim Women Union is a Platform for Muslim Women worldwide, it envisages a vision for a sounder world order, where conflicts are resolved, justice, equity peace and religious tolerance and co-existence, prevail.

The International Muslim Women Union is hosted by the generous country of Sudan. Out of gratitude and appreciation, we should mention that poverty situation is one of the challenges in this developing country, it is further aggravated by the unfair, unjustified and uncalled for unilateral sanction imposed on its people.

In actuality, women and children are the real victims facing challenges in education, health and social protection. Not to forget to mention the unrelieved debts' situation.

It is only opportune to mention that these situations are not exclusive to Sudan only, but other developing countries suffer the same tragic fate. The financial situation of these countries is critically affected which made the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals' indicators unreachable.

In the final analysis, we women under the International Muslim Women Union umbrella, call upon the international community to support these developing countries by working to relieve debts and uplift sanction, so as to enable them to achieve the sustainable development for post 2015 agenda.

Furthermore, we in the International Muslim Women Union hail and salute the noble struggle of women under occupation and show our solidarity towards the uprooted, displaced and women refugees.

International Muslim Women's Union is enhancing women's capacity to manage unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability and old age empowerment of women girls to get their chance to enjoy their rights to education, employment, medical care, housing and other respects.

International Muslim Women's Union aims to empower women around the world and women who are especially literate and vulnerable. It also aims to develop their skills and interest in their health and education through the implementation of scholarships for some African students and the Midwifery Training Project.

Maternal mortality or childbirth is one of the main challenges that face African countries. The rate is estimated in some countries as more than 1,200 per 100,000 live births, which makes these countries at the bottom of the list to achieve the goals of

sustainable development. However, despite this steady increase in mortality, there are many opportunities to reduce mortality and provide excellent services for expectant mothers. These opportunities include midwifery training, which is an important strategy in achieving maternal and child health and to graduate significant number of African females in many scientific fields to achieve the objective of sustainable development.

International Muslim Women's Union is a voluntary and non-governmental organization, and its role is to assist women in African countries in general and Muslims in particular and vulnerable in the implementation of training courses in the field of maternal and child health and the project to ensure female students in the health fields in African Countries.

In view of the importance of the female students and their leading role, missionary and leadership in the societies, especially in African countries, which suffer from a shortage of health staff, the International Muslim Women's Union seeks to graduate the largest number of scientific competencies in this field by forming strategic partnerships with a number of Sudanese universities and institutions to provide an excellent educational environment for the incoming students under the terms and policies of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

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Statement submitted by C-Fam, Inc., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

The family is the most important or only source of social protection for over seventy percent of the world's women. According to the International Labour Organization, more than five billion people on the planet are not covered by comprehensive social security.

Because of the outsized importance of women in the context of the family as mothers, wives, caregivers, and providers, it is essential for the international community to address the family as a subject, vehicle, and principal beneficiary of social protection. As the Beijing Platform for Action recognized in 1995, "women make a great contribution to the welfare of the family and to the development of society, which is still not recognized or considered in its full importance." This remains as true today as it was then.

The international community and governments individually have shown themselves unable to focus on the family in international policy, and even fewer women in the context of the family. And mothers are the least represented of women in United Nations debates.

Indigenous women, women who identify as lesbian or male, businesswomen, and other women are often represented in United Nations debates. But mothers too often get left behind. No doubt this is a function of the selfless and strenuous non-stop work women often take on as mothers. But this neglect must change if the international community is serious about addressing social protection in a way that contributes to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Policies and programs that target the family and consider the important role of women in the family must begin from the starting point of the equality of women and men in the context of marriage and the family, and the nature of the family itself. This organization submitted a statement to the 57th Commission on Social Development outlining the core elements of family protection relevant to social protection policy. Unless laws and policies protect the family unit from instability and dissolution, they cannot be said to be family-friendly.

For women's equality and their empowerment, [illegible]s important to highlight other protective measures that are specific to women.

The Beijing Platform for Action recognized the social significance of maternity, motherhood and the role of parents in the family and in the upbringing of children. Importantly, it declared that maternity, motherhood, parenting and the role of women in procreation must not be a basis for discrimination nor restrict the full participation of women in society. Indeed, in order to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment, social protection policies must tackle any form of unjust discrimination against women because of their role as mothers. This form of unjust discrimination is especially odious because it punishes women for a family role only they can take on since men cannot ever conceive and gestate children.

Furthering the Beijing agenda for women, target 5.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals recognize the importance of shared responsibility between women and men in the context of the family, as well as, unpaid care and domestic work.

It recognizes that policies to end all forms of unjust discrimination against women must necessarily emphasize the full recognition of the benefits to society of the unpaid care that women carry out in the family looking after children, the elderly, and other members of their family. Women undertake a disproportionate share of this

work and respecting their equal dignity requires first of all that society fully recognize and value the unpaid work that women undertake in the family.

So long as women are penalized socially and fiscally as second-class citizens when they engage in domestic work and unpaid care they can never achieve economic empowerment and financial inclusion. The debate about domestic work and unpaid care must shift from finding ways to get more women to work in the formal economic sector, as opposed to domestic work and unpaid care, to finding ways to ensure women's lion share of unpaid work and domestic care is fully recognized and valued by society.

It is not enough to create access to markets and economic means. If the only type of work women undertake that is valued and recognized by society is in the formal economy, then women do not have a real option. Fully valuing unpaid care and domestic work is essential for women to be truly empowered and for their equal dignity with men to be respected.

Often the discussion of the gender-wage gap reinforces the narrative that women, in order to be fully empowered and included, must engage in equal numbers in the same identical economic and political activities as men. Far from providing women with choices, this is a utopic and hegemonic goal that can never be realized without some form of coercion. Instead of getting bogged down in the gender pay-gap, member states should consider expanding United Nations policy on equal opportunity in education, the workforce, and the public sector, paying particular attention to the needs, preferences, and choices of women.

In addition to policies to tackle unjust discrimination against mothers, essential family-oriented social protection measures include providing women with the best possible maternal health. Essential to fully recognizing the equal dignity of women must be to recognize and value their role as mothers from the moment they conceive a baby, through birth, and throughout their time as caregivers.

So long as the choice of having a baby is prohibitively dangerous to the life of women or their baby women cannot be said to be empowered or their equal dignity fully respected. Women must have access to the tools to achieve optimal maternal health: education, prenatal and post-natal care, access to life-saving emergency obstetric care, and adequate nutrition and hydration among other things.

At the same time, women must be helped to make the choices that are most authentically theirs. The unethical mischaracterization of women's reproductive intentions through statistical indicators such as "unmet need for contraception" are taking power away from women in poor countries by lasciviously directing resources and attention to family planning when maternal health investments lag behind.

It also means protection from the predatory and unscrupulous abortion industry. Women in vulnerable situations are frequently lured into seeking abortions by a narrative that makes abortion seem like a compassionate choice to a crisis pregnancy. But the truth is that abortion is a tragedy with two victims: the mother and the child.

At the International Conference on Population and Development member states committed to helping women avoid abortion and to provide them with the best health-care and psychosocial support. The operative assumption of that agreement was that abortion is something to be avoided and discouraged and that it is a criminal act, as it is to this day, in most countries' circumstances, with few exceptions.

It is therefore alarming to witness United Nations bodies and officials say that abortion is a human right as is too often the case, and even interfere in the internal affairs of state on this score. Abortion can never be considered a form of social protection, never mind a human right. Women deserve better than abortion and

member states committed to providing them with better social support in the Cairo agreement.

Social protection cannot be achieved without passing through the family. It can only be realized by empowering women to embrace their potential to be mothers as well as to successfully navigate the world of business. The recent trend in international debates is to predicate women's equality exclusively on women's rights in the workplace, but with not enough attention paid to their roles as mothers and caregivers in the family, including the need to provide the social conditions for women to make the choice to become mothers without any kind of coercion, including economic coercion.

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Statement submitted by The Entrepreneurship Development Foundation for Women and Youth, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world: the important role of civil society and non-governmental organisations in women's empowerment

Having seen the achievements of the developed countries nowadays and their success in building international relationships, strengthening social developments has become the main goal of developing countries. But a developed society is for sure achieved only by participation of most of the population including both genders (men and women) to play their role in the society.

The number of women active and present especially in managerial positions in a country is one of the factors of rating how developed a country is.

To have this active participation, a society needs a lot of preparation, culturally and structurally so the society is ready to accept the women as involved as the men throughout the process of development.

The focus on two groups of women should be highlighted throughout the way:

- University graduated women which are part of a country's asset
- Serious investment on deprived areas to arrange educational courses especially for young women who will soon have to find their role in family and society.

Here is where the important role of non-governmental organisations even becomes more clear and necessary not only to facilitate the progress of preparation and participation but also to maintain the ongoing development and stability in it throughout the way.

Therefore, The Entrepreneurship Development Foundation for Women and Youth has decided to focus on this subject as the main theme aligned with the priority theme of this year in 60th Session of the Commission for Social Development at United Nations (2016).

Established in 2005, The Entrepreneurship Development Foundation for Women and Youth is a non-governmental, non-profit organization with the goal of promoting private sector market-oriented business activities for women and youth with a special emphasis on innovative entrepreneurship. The Foundation's five major areas of action are:

- Identifying entrepreneurial and local business opportunities
- Supporting start-up youth and young entrepreneurs
- Identifying young talent and development of teens through Entrepreneurship Room in Schools program
- Capacity-building of entrepreneurs and business owners and documenting their professional experiences
- Promoting social entrepreneurship and capacity building of Non-Governmental Organizations.

We, in the Entrepreneurship Development Foundation for Women and Youth have implemented such projects in underserved and marginal areas with the purpose of promoting women participation in economic and social spheres.

During the past decade the Entrepreneurship Development Foundation for Women and Youth successfully achieved national and productive models in the areas of women and economy, women and poverty as well as women empowerment.

These projects have the potential for scaling up and further evolving and expanding to other developing communities. Promoting creative entrepreneurship and other private market-oriented income-generating business and self-employment opportunities for women and youth not only increases their role in economic, social and cultural spheres but also strengthens their intellectual independence.

To summarize the above here is our organization's guideline to be considered for achieving a sustainable development through women's empowerment:

- Promote women entrepreneurship and other private market-oriented income-generating business and self-employment opportunities for women through strengthening the main infrastructures such as education, consultation, financial resources, regulations and access to information.
- Empower women especially those who living in marginal areas especially the female-headed households through home-based businesses and supporting them with needed resources in order to enter the job market.
- Make a connection between networks of local Non-Governmental Organizations nationwide and support their international communication in order to strengthen the quantity and quality of female presence in the economic, social and cultural field. In this case, it is better to be led by a head organization (officially or non-officially).
- Establish more action programs to encourage women's presence up to higher levels in decision-making positions.
- Provide educational programs for those women who cannot afford it or should deal with so many challenges and barriers in order to continue their educations. Surely this event will help to establish the basic culture.
- Promote women the confidence to believe themselves in order to be a part of a society, and how to treat their children more confident. "

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Statement submitted by Federation Europeenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme (FECRIS), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

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* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Please recycle

Statement

In the United Nations post 2015 Inequalities Consultation, it was noted a relative neglect of marginalized groups widening in social inequities. Many sect organizations suffer from female discrimination, abuse and sexual slavery. They truly need social protection systems and victim assistance with ongoing support with access to competent public services.

We at the Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme have observed a characteristic problem with cult or extremist terrorists' organizations that women and girls are seen as inferior or lesser beings through totalitarian indoctrination and authoritarian abusive leadership. This serious imbalance of power relationship seriously interferes with the fundamental human rights of women and minor females. The Commission on the Status of Women is committed to protection of human rights but also the rights of children have been on record as well. We at the Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme support these hard won human rights accomplishments. We also are committed on the international venue approach to the United Nations that a more informed public awareness come to light. It can be expressed through the Commission on the Status of Women concerning the devastating plight of female sect members abusive discrimination and are despised when they do not comply to cultic demands.

We at Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme need to network and bring to awareness to the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women 63 concerning unwanted gender discrimination and the empowerment of women and minor girls. It is most important to understand the destructive nature of complete control cult leaders have over their female victims. Decent work for all is truly lacking for women and female minors in sects and extremist terrorist groups. Many impoverished females are not paid salaries or very low subsistence wages for their labour and children are especially exploited as virtual or actual slaves without pay. Cult leadership collect vast amount financial gain for themselves with no social welfare programs and without retirement provision for active sect members. There is truly a crucial human outcry for a social protection system for such a needy population that we at Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme must address before the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women 63. We also appreciate the ongoing accomplishments and resources this Commission has made available to the United Nations.

When addressing cult inequities for women and minor females and gender parity in education is truly lacking for females due to lack of status in sect life. Due to inferior status expressed in extremist sect life where young female minors and women are sexual slaves, some suffer genital mutilation and can be sold to other sect leaders as personal property. Violence against females for total compliance can extend to physical abuse and forced unwanted marriages without remedy inside the destructive cult. Outside access to public services with a viable sustainable infrastructure is truly needed for a population such as this needs addressing. We at Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme would support efforts towards true fully informed choices concerning outside commission resources. Educational resources without discrimination and protection of female and human rights with equity will go a long way toward a healthy transition with healing and potential recovery. The problem with totally controlled cult life for women that live in closed communities from the outside world is that women's rights are rendered virtually invisible to non-sect members. It is important to address the vulnerability and inequities imposed on this female population.

It is also important to observe the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women that provided the basis for protection against discrimination toward women and younger females. Legal tools and resources are truly needed for female cult victims and their families. These options can empower women to access human and social rights. The opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, society and political decision-making. The structural determinants of gender-based inequities based on international commission research is in having access to resources.

The Commission on the Status of Women wants to eradicate violence against women and girls to ensure fair access to social services and resources and to guarantee women's inclusion in post-conflict decision making processes. Minor female and child sexual abuse victims need special assistance and our Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme organization has specialized experts and experience to provide for the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women 63 where appropriate.

It is really important in terms of cult life that thematic consultation on education approaches the needs of young female cult members that needs parity and addresses the learning outcomes of girls. It is vital that they complete primary, secondary and tertiary education that includes the dignity of human rights for females. Child sex abuse amongst cult teachers is not transparent to our outside mainstream democratic and open societies. Required legal reporting measures are needed and the improvement and safety, security and wellbeing of students around our schools for children. The sect lifestyle concerning children is seriously under reported concerning abusive practices in cult learning centres or schools but second-generation cult children, especially report these abuses to the outside world. In the arena of access to public services the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women 63 can be instrumental in facilitating these critical resources for the empowerment of these females.

The Governance consultation provides opportunities for women provide access to female sect victims to address discrimination and inequities imposed on them by cult subjugation and compliance to abusive group hierarchies. When dealing with governance of the economy cult members deprived of the mainstream societal channels to most non-cult members would apply appropriately. The procedure to access social protection needs education and understanding. Accessing those resources can help Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme serve this special community along with the Commission on the Status of Women in a mutual networking for the better welfare women and female minors. The Health consultation provide women and minor females need health care resources that totalitarian cult organizations deprived hard working active members. Many sects lack the financial provision for health care coverage for the average cult member. Many cult victims do not have the financial resources to protect themselves for health maintenance and even worse a real health crisis. It is not uncommon for cult members to suffer long term preventable health problems. It is due to inexpensive substandard diets and lack of health care maintenance and long-term neglect. The violation of basic human rights contributes greatly toward health neglect. The Commission on the Status of Women has promoted access to quality, comprehensive, integrated health care services, that includes counselling for women and girls. We at Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme would want to assist female sect victims with this commission towards better health and healing towards women and females who truly need it.

In order to progress in achieving the noble goals social protection for women cult members and all females. An accountability framework is essential for real tangible success to work. Cults have a very long and troubling history of avoiding public transparency and accountability. They protect their assets and wealth over the

fundamental human rights of individual cult victims. The harm and human abuse costs are tragic and devastating. Gender based discrimination needs solution-oriented access to a sustainable social infrastructure to provide access to qualified and appropriate public services. This can be helpful in prospects for eliminating poverty. Protection patterns are needed supported by public and transparent policies accessible to those who truly need it. The 2019 Commission on the Status of Women 63 can be instrumental channel towards assisting those women and other females toward empowerment. We at Fédération Européenne des Centres de Recherche et d'Information sur le Sectarisme desire to work with such noble goals and efforts toward the betterment of women former members towards a better and brighter future.

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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Statement submitted by International Network of Liberal Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Governments need to invest in social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure to redress gender inequalities. Prevailing gender stereotypes and discrimination produce an unequal division of labour in the home where women and girls shoulder the brunt of unpaid care work. The International Labour Organisation reports that women undertake more than three times as much care work compared to men. Other studies show that for example in Sub-Saharan Africa, over 70 per cent of the responsibility of collecting water for household use falls on women and girls. This also disproportionately impacts women from marginalized groups such as rural women and perpetuates a cycle of impoverishment as it limits the time, mobility and opportunities available to women. This cycle of inequalities is continuously acknowledged by the Commission on the Status of Women, as recently as the 62nd Session Agreed Conclusions but remains largely invisible and unacknowledged in government economic and social policy making.

Access to Public Services

Women's access to public services are threatened by trade and investment agreements that provide for the use of investor state dispute settlements that give corporations the right to sue governments. Investor state dispute settlements are a manifestation of the unequal power relations between corporations and governments and are problematic because they are opaque and costly processes that undermine the ability of governments to make decisions in the public interest. In this case, they make it harder for governments to regulate and deliver public services. For example, there are cases where governments have attempted to take steps to de-privatize public services for the benefit of the public interest and have been sued by corporations for doing so. The high cost of these cases therefore serves as a deterrent to States that may wish to take action to ensure women and girls have access to available, acceptable public services of high quality.

Sustainable Infrastructure

Governments, supported by international financial institutions and commercial investors make huge investments in transport infrastructure (highways, airports), sometimes at the cost of displacement of whole communities. Yet, the lack of last-mile connectivity in rural areas, the underfunding of public transport and the reduction in its quality, and the costs of travel for women whose care responsibilities require multiple trips exacerbates women's time poverty and gender inequality. Women are constrained in their access to essential health services, girls to higher educational institutions, and women producers to markets.

We are concerned by the reduced investment in public services seen globally. When public services are inaccessible, unavailable and inadequately funded the responsibility of care overwhelmingly falls on girls and women to fill the gap. We are also concerned by the push to liberalize and privatize public services. When public services are privatized they are more likely to replicate inequalities as only women from higher income households can afford these services when user fees go up. The same is true for private transport services that only operate n profitable routes, letting poor women's mobility and access to basic services, and requires them to walk long distances.

Recommendations

We reiterate the recommendations made by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights and call upon States to take measures to redistribute the burden of unpaid care work by investing in public services.

We recommend that public services remain a public good. We urge States to adhere to the guidance of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that call on States to ensure that public services such as health, water, electricity, gas and others are available; accessible; acceptable; and of high quality.

In cases where public services have already been privatized, we call on States to regulate private service providers to ensure that they also meet these standards. Even more so in these cases States need to regulate private service providers to ensure they do not entrench and reproduce inequalities. The obligation to respect, protect and fulfil women's human rights cannot be abrogated even when public services are in the hands of private actors. This is line with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Social Protection

Social protection policies and systems are necessary to address existing female poverty and the social and economic exclusion of women due to various forms of discrimination and structural inequalities such as labour market discrimination, restrictions on ownership and control of land and property, unequal remuneration, the concentration of women in precarious, informal and unstable employment, workplace violence, pregnancy - related discrimination in employment, gendered divisions of household labour and the undervaluing of women's contributions to domestic, community and care work, as well as the impact of unchecked incentive systems for business enterprises, FDIs and unregulated and unequal trade systems which diminish legal protections in critical areas of social protection such as health, housing, productive and natural assets, job safety and security and wage protection. Social protections are mandated as a key element to addressing social exclusion, poverty eradication and women's economic empowerment in the Sustainable Development Goals, however International Labour Organization statistics show only 27 per cent of the world's population so far have some form of social protection.

Recommendations

We urge States to establish social protection systems that ensure healthcare, pension and income security, that prioritise the most vulnerable and at risk to and in the current context of demographic changes in the population and the nature of the job market moving towards more flexible and precarious employment to ensure particularly in cases of old age, unemployment/low job tenure, sickness, invalidity, work injury, maternity or loss of a main income earner.

We recommend that national poverty eradication schemes measure poverty trends and incidences at a substantive level beyond the statistical measure of extreme poverty in order to design appropriate social programs and social protection measures that address their specific poverty and exclusion context. This could include family nutritional levels, changes in household income spending and attrition of property and other productive assets, and female income.

We urge States to extend social protection including health protection under national protection and welfare schemes especially to women in care work and informal sectors, female headed households, domestic workers and migrant workers, women and girls with disability, and to diverse family settings as social protection is

a critical factor in ensuring their social inclusion and equal participation in the social, political and economic spheres.

We recommend that States ring fence national budgets for healthcare and social protection, especially in crisis situations such as disasters or economic crises.

We recommend that States ensure the levels of social benefits ensure a basic standard of living and are not based on strict eligibility criteria which have resulted in a situation in which many women living in poverty, in particular single mothers, older women and those without previous employment, are excluded from social protection.